

SOVIET POLICY IX WARTIME

of similar mob demonstrations took place in most of the important cities in the Soviet zone of occupation. Tass reported, for example, that in Tabriz alone twenty-five thousand workers protested in a mass rally against Sa'ed's policy.

If this mob pressure was conceived by the Soviets as likely to modify the negative attitude of Premier Sa'ed, it did not achieve the desired result. To make matters worse, from the Soviet viewpoint, the American Ambassador, Leland B. Morris, revealed the United States' stand on the matter. The American government, he said, recognized the sovereign right of Iran to refuse the granting of oil concessions and did not reproach the Iranian government on that account.

On November 4 *Izvestia*, the official organ of the Soviet government, renewed its attack on Premier Sa'ed, whom it linked with former Premier Zia ed-Din. Zia was described as a "man who long ago took up the profession of trading with the honor and independence of his country in the interests of his foreign masters."

Izvestia asked

how the presence of troops of another State on Iranian territory without any treaty with Iran tallies with Iran's sovereignty and independence. As is known, apart from Soviet and British troops that are on Iranian territory in conformity with the treaty of alliance, there are also American forces in Iran. But these forces stay there entirely without a treaty with the Iranian government.³¹

It was clear that a new element was introduced into the oil debate, namely, the Soviet view that British and American influence stood behind Iran's refusal. The Soviet attack on American troops in Iran elicited an acid reply from the State Department, which said that they were there "in connection with the running

of the railroad
for the delivery of lend-lease supplies through that
country to Russia." The statement added that American troops were
invited to enter
Iran by the British forces of occupation and that
negotiations had
recently begun between the United States and Iran
"to cover their
presence."³²

A United Press dispatch from Washington, published
in the American
press on November 6, said in this connection:

si Quoted in the *New York Times*, Nov. 5, 1944.

32 *Ibid.*, Nov. 5, 1944.